

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL

Minutes of August 12, 2003

Welcome and Introductions

Chair Karen McGee opened the meeting at 9:40 a.m. and welcomed everyone to the College of Southern Idaho. She introduced the new Education representative to the Council, Dr. Dene Thomas, President of Lewis-Clark State College. She also introduced David Lehman, the Governor's Policy Advisor for Health and Human Services, and newly appointed as lead staff to the Council. David shared information on the Policy Academy, noting that a number of individuals were involved in drafting a strategic plan for workforce development. He remarked that there is a real opportunity to make significant progress.

Consent Agenda

- **Action Items: Minutes of April 8, 2003 meeting; Transmittal #1 Annual Request on the Special Administrative Fund**
- **Information Items: Transmittals #2, #3 and #4**

Chair McGee announced that because the Council did not have a quorum, the Council would defer all action items to the next meeting (the minutes and the Administrative Tax request). She then introduced Transmittal #2, modifications to the Strategic Five Year Plan for WIA and Wagner-Peyser, and asked Cheryl Brush to explain the changes. Cheryl noted that while the plan incorporated policies previously adopted by the Council, there were three new items. These were the performance standards negotiated with the federal government, changes to the plans for use of State 15% funds, and an update to the Migrant and Seasonal Farmworker Plan. Cheryl said the most substantive change was the reduction in funding for One Stop infrastructure to allow additional funding for youth in need.

Chair McGee referenced Transmittal #3 from the Idaho Professional-Technical Foundation, which encourages business participation in an initiative to recognize the importance of professional-technical education. Dr. Mike Rush, Professional-Technical Education, advised the Council that this was for information and that the effort was completed.

Chair McGee also reported that the final report on the Jobs for Idaho's Graduates program was in Transmittal #4. In response to a question from the Chair, Dr. Rush clarified that programs would continue to be operated but that funding would not permit continued affiliation with the Jobs for America's Graduates program.

Report from the Chair

Chair McGee reported that she has been very involved in working on legislation to reauthorize WIA legislation. She announced that Congressman Otter met with her and

House leadership on the bill and that she had met with Senate staff. The National Association of State Workforce Board Chairs has been very active in trying to ensure that the Governor has enough authority and flexibility to serve as the CEO for the workforce development umbrella. She reminded the Council that the Governor would become Chair of the National Governors' Association and would be very active. She said that the bill will become a major topic in September and that said it was time to get past the minutia and get a bill passed.

Chair McGee also told the Council that it was important to look at what is being accomplished as a Council. She said that not enough has been done on performance outcomes and that she is planning a meeting with Emma Gebo to begin work on this effort. This provides a good opportunity to get business involved. She closed by saying that she was very happy to have Governor Kempthorne remain in Idaho.

Legislative Update

Cheryl Brush, Department of Labor, reported on the status of the WIA reauthorization legislation, noting that it passed the House in the spring but was not scheduled for Senate subcommittee action until September. Cheryl reported that the Senate is committed to a bi-partisan bill which will take the bill in a different direction than the House. At this time, the consolidation of the Adult, Dislocated Worker and Employment Service funds has been taken off the table. Based on an early draft, it appears that, from a state perspective, the bill will still lack the degree of flexibility we had hoped. Key issues include those that we mentioned as concerns in the House bill—governance, including flexibility for board make up and workforce area designation, discretion over the use of state funds, infrastructure funding for the one stop system, the prescriptive youth funding and the allocation of 25% of limited funding to national challenge grants, and the lack of waiver or block grant authority for the Governor.

External Study Committee on Unemployment Insurance Update (Transmittal #5)

Dwight Johnson, Public Affairs Administrator, IDOL, provided an update on the Internal Study Committee on Idaho's Unemployment Insurance (UI) System's recommendations to the Legislature's External Study Committee. The mission of the Internal Committee is to ensure the public policy goals of Idaho's UI system include an adequate UI Trust Fund, a responsive UI tax system with competitive tax rates, and adequate UI benefits, comparable with national averages.

Dwight reported that the Study Committee was formed because the UI Trust Fund, in its present form, is defective. There is no longer a sufficient amount of incoming funds to support the amount of funds being paid out, which means that the Fund could run out of money. With a tax freeze in effect until January 2005, the rate will automatically rise, increasing taxes over 100% if no action is taken at that time. Forestalling tax increases until the economy improves is no longer considered a suitable strategy.

The Committee recommends changes in the tax model, by adopting a new “equitable & proportional” UI tax system replacing the current table, which utilizes nine tax schedules with a single tax formula/algorithm. Along with the changes in the tax model, the Committee recommends a series of UI benefit reductions for consideration in order to reduce costs.

Also proposed were nine recommendations to change or amend UI tax collection policies, as well five policy recommendations to improve the ability to effectively administer the UI system. Adopting all the proposed measures could lead to a tax reduction of 5% to 22% per year, depending on the economy, with the Trust Fund realizing a savings of approximately \$16 million in 2005.

Dwight stated that these proposals would be submitted to the UI External Study Committee later in the month, with a follow-up meeting in September. Some discussion ensued about the impact of the proposed changes to the system and those who would be affected (businesses and recipients). Dwight invited all interested parties to attend the meetings of the External Study Committee and to voice any concerns they have regarding the proposed changes.

Announcement from Region III

Susan Choate announced that the Governor had proclaimed September 1st *IdahoWorks* Day to promote the workforce development system in the state. She stated that there would be open houses in several One Stop Centers throughout the state. The public is invited to participate in all the festivities.

Highlights from College of Southern Idaho

President Jerry Meyerhoeffler highlighted the College of Southern Idaho in his presentation. He addressed the possible expansion of the campus, noting there are approximately 80 acres situated adjacent to the College. CSI has the lowest expenditures of all public, higher education institutions in the state, operating with no student or institutional debt.

The College’s communications system connects all its satellite campuses in an efficient manner, allowing more students to attend and participate in classes they may not otherwise attend.

The College serves predominantly Magic Valley residents, with 87% of its students residing within an eight-county area, and 11.6% of all area residents age 16 and over having participated in some coursework from the College during the 2002 school year. Its demographics are similar to that of Boise State University.

Tour at the Dell Facility—Dell Computers led Council members on a tour of its facilities in Twin Falls.

Report from Workforce Investment Area

➤ Region IV

Collaboration and Partnerships

Chair McGee introduced Candy McElfresh, staff to the South Central Idaho Works! Board, who in turn introduced a group of presenters from a variety of local workforce/economic/community development efforts, which are all inter-connected in the Magic Valley. She added that the partnership/collaboration in Region IV has resulted in excellent results.

Magic Valley Youth and Adult Services – Sylvia Ann Bradshaw introduced staff and students participating in a series of community improvement projects, designed to provide contextual learning opportunities – combining learning and earning – to WIA youth. Youth designed and carried out each project, with materials donated by local communities; trainers for the projects were educators, who helped youth learn and apply basic skills to project activity. Staff and/or students from Wendell School District, Richfield School District, and Minidoka County shared their experiences and perspectives with Council members and guests.

Andy Torres shared with WDC members how his participation in WIA changed his perspective on life. Staff from the Idaho State School for the Deaf and Blind also shared their thoughts on the successes of local collaboration.

Youth Offender Transition House – Bill Brockman, Twin Falls County Commissioner, provided an overview of an effort underway locally to create an aftercare facility for juvenile offenders who return to the community from state custody; Magic Valley Regional Medical Center has donated the facility, a USDOL grant was received for operating costs and an economic development grant will finance the remodeling of the facility.

Youth Yellow Pages – Candy McElfresh distributed copies of a Youth Yellow Pages, a resource directory for youth services in the Magic Valley, indicating that 18,000 of these directories had been distributed to schools and community-based organizations throughout the region. Funding is being sought for a second printing, which will include a Spanish version.

She added that the Region IV Youth Council is working collaboratively with the Hispanic Business Association to convene focus groups and address the Hispanic dropout rate.

The Customer Perspective

Michelle Root, Human Resources with Solo Cup, shared their company's business interactions with the Twin Falls Job Service. She complimented the

labor exchange services and Workforce Development Training Fund contract assistance received during the business opening and noted their ongoing partnership during the last six years.

An overview of ABE, GED, and ESL services at CSI included individuals who had actually been in the programs. All were grateful for the support received and for the positive impact it made on their success in the workforce.

Chair McGee thanked all of the Region IV presenters for their attendance and participation, and noted holding these meetings around the state has given the Council members insight into actual workings of WIA.

New Business

Since the Council did not have a quorum, and time was running short, Chair McGee asked that the consent agenda, and the Innovations in Professional-Technical Education presentation be moved to the next Council meeting.

Next Meeting

Chair McGee stated that Alice Taylor will send out dates for the next Council meeting. At that meeting, the Council will also review goals, receive a presentation from the Commission on Aging, and a legislative update. If there are other items that members would like to see on the agenda, please notify Alice.

Chair McGee thanked Dr. Jerry Beck for the accommodations for the meeting at CSI.

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:45 p.m.

Attendance:

Workforce Development Council
August 12, 2003

Council Members:

Steve Ahrens (absent)
Janet Aikele (absent)
Lois Bauer
Jerry Beck
Coleen Erickson
Millie Flandro (absent)
Emma Gebo (absent)
Jim Hawkins (absent)
Cindy Hedge (absent)
Marilyn Howard (absent)
Jay Engstrom for LaMoyne Hyde
Joyce McRoberts for Karl Kurtz
Roger Madsen (absent)
Max McClintick
Karen McGee
Ruth Rathbun (absent)
Jim Soyk
Shirley Stensgar (absent)
Gary Stivers
Dene Thomas
Dave Whaley (absent)

Guests:

Melinda Adams
Susan Baca
Linda Barnes
Rico Barrera
Sylvia Ann Bradshaw
Cheryl Brush
Terry Butikofer
Alex Castaneda
Susan Choate
Pat Debban
Wally DeBoard
Jim Fields
Donna Fletcher
Laura Gleason

Joe Herring
David Lehman
John McAllister
Candy McElfresh
Jerry Meyerhoeffer
Don Pena
Bob Perky
Pamela Petersen
Kat Powell
Michelle Root
Mike Rush
Shirley Spencer
Marian Steel
Alice Taylor
Allan Taylor
Brent Tolman
Kay Vaughan
Rich Watson